

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

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2023 APR 18 PM 4:00

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

Date of Meeting: Thursday, March 23, 2023

Location: Norton Middle School Library

Present: Committee Members: Chairperson Mr. Dan Sheedy, Vice Chairperson Mrs. Sheri Cohen, Mrs. Carolyn Gallagher, Deniz Savas, and Mr. Nick Schleicher. ***Also present:*** Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer O'Neill, School Business Administrator Kristine Hadfield, and Student Representatives Malia Savas and Antonio Romano.

Call to Order: Chairperson Sheedy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Sheedy announced that the meeting was being recorded and asked that if anyone was recording to let the Committee know.

NHS Scholastic Art Awards Recipients and Memory Project Information:

Norton High School Art Teacher, Robin Lewicki, introduced some students that participated in the annual Scholastic Art Awards and noted the awards each won, as follows:

Deven Becker – (2) Silver Keys

Ali Murphy, Nora Platt, and Jonah Ferraro – Honorable Mention

The students briefly spoke about their artwork which was on display for the School Committee and audience.

Mrs. Lewicki also talked about the Memory Project, which is a non-profit organization dedicated to making peaceful, creative connections between teens across the world. The National Art Honor Society, as a community service project, created portraits of orphaned teens from India. These students will receive the portraits as a gift from our NHS students this summer. In turn, NHS will receive a video of the portrait recipients.

Chairperson Sheedy noted that he would like to see the video. The students were congratulated by the Committee and were presented with certificates from Dr. Baeta.

Winter Sports Update and Recognitions:

Director of Athletics, Aaron Sumner, updated the Committee on the winter sports season, recognizing the following teams and individuals who were present at the meeting:

- Girls Swim & Dive – 1st NHS league title
- Hockey – 1st NHS league title
- Wrestling – Sectional Champions

Individual State Champions:

- Gabe Thomasson - Wrestling
- Daniel Ayala - Wrestling
- Shea Podbelski - Track
- Ali Murphy - Track
- Jillian Strynar - Track
- Matt Cropley – Track

The athletes were congratulated by the Committee and were presented with certificates from Dr. Baeta. Mr. Sumner noted that there were several individual All Stars and MVP's from the season. Mr. Sumner also recognized Mr. Pat Coleman, Wrestling Coach, who is retiring from the position after many successful seasons. The team received MIAA Gold Level Academic Excellence and were also nominated by officials for the Tri-Valley Sportsmanship Award.

Mr. Coleman was congratulated and received a standing ovation from the Committee and audience.

The Committee took a short break to allow students and families to depart from the meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve Minutes of March 9, 2023 Open Session Meeting

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

5 - 0 Motion Carries

Warrants:

Mrs. Cohen reported that the following School Expense Warrants and School Payroll Warrants were reviewed and approved and are to be entered into public record:

School Expense Warrant:

- March 9, 2023 \$ 355,427.94

School Payroll Warrants:

- March 9, 2023 \$1,143,436.21

Student Representatives Update:

Malia Savas and Antonio Romano updated the Committee on school activities, as follows:

JCS – Students were asked what they were looking forward to before the end of the school year. Answers included Field Day, and Sea Turtle Day when they will be celebrating the history of JCS and launching this year's sea turtle fundraiser to raise money to protect sea turtle nests along the Atlantic coast. Preschool and Kindergarten orientations are being held next week at JCS and LGN.

HAY – PTO Trivia Night raised over \$2,000 for the new playground and included 22 teams and donations from 12 local businesses; ELA MCAS starting in a few weeks; new playground installation will start in the spring.

NMS – Students participated in crazy socks day in honor of students with Down Syndrome; clothing drive for Cradles to Crayons organization underway as part of the Project 351 program; Unified basketball team participated in a jamboree along with 5 other schools and was recognized by Special Olympics MA as an official event. A total of 25 students participated on the unified team this season; baseball and softball to begin season on April 1st; 6th Grade ELA MCAS to start next Monday.

NHS School to Career Program Update:

Ms. Heidi Kozikis, NHS School-to-Career Specialist, updated the Committee on her role at NHS and her interactions with students which include: work study program, Innovation Pathways, STEAM Showcase, Career Day, Opportunities Fair, Credit for Life Fair, and military lunch visits. She also shows students how to write a resume, complete tax forms, and fill out job applications and employee paperwork. Ms. Kozikis also works 1:1 with students and helps them with job searches.

Students Aeris and Logan from NMS spoke about the help they have received from Ms. Kozikis from resume writing to bouncing ideas around regarding career paths.

Dr. Baeta and Mr. Vinnie Cerce, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, commended Ms. Kozikis on the tremendous work she does and how she engages not just students but staff members as well. The Attleboro Area School-to-Career Partnership services the towns of Attleboro, Mansfield, North Attleboro, Norton, and Seekonk. Ms. Kozikis spends 30 – 35 hours per week at Norton.

Technology Update:

Director of Instructional Technology, Karen Winsper, introduced members of the Technology team: Nick Zelinski and John Faria, Network Technicians, and Digital Learning Specialist, Christina Scilingo, who were present at the meeting. Mrs. Winsper also acknowledged Paul Driscoll, Network Administrator, and Ryan Robidoux, Digital Learning Specialist, and numerous other staff members, including Teacher Technology Liaisons, who work closely with and/or directly support the Technology department.

Mrs. Winsper, with input from Ms. Scilingo updated the Committee on the following areas:

- Hardware & Infrastructure including inventory comparison, projects and initiatives in progress and those on the horizon.
- Supporting Teaching & Learning through pre-approved SMART Goals and supporting District initiatives such as STEAM Showcase, ALICE training video for staff, revisiting technology policies, NEED Grants, Norton Media Center Grants, and General Dynamics Mission Systems Community Grants.
- Challenges such as cybersecurity
- Technology budget

Committee members and others participated in a hands-on coding activity with KIBO robots.

Review and Vote on 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 School Calendars:

As discussed at the previous meeting, the calendars have been updated by moving the March early release days from the end of the month to the middle of the month for both years.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 School Calendars as Presented

SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher

5 - 0 Motion Carries

Review and Vote on READS Collaborative Agreement Effective July 1, 2023:

Dr. Baeta explained that updates have been made to the agreement to reflect changes in regulations and the addition of member towns, as well as some other language changes, none of which is major.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to approve READS Collaborative Agreement

SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher

5 - 0 Motion Carries

Review and Vote on Bi-County Collaborative Agreement Effective July 1, 2023:

Dr. Baeta noted updates have been made similar to READS agreement as discussed during the previous agenda item.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve Bi-County Collaborative Agreement

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

5 - 0 Motion Carries

First Reading – Therapy Canines Policy:

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed new policy. It was asked if this new policy could just be added to the current Animals in School Policy so to have just one policy.

Dr. Baeta said that he would check with legal counsel.

Second Reading and Vote on Secondary Students Freedom of Expression Policy:

It was questioned if the Committee should stop voting on policies which contain codified Massachusetts General Laws. The legal references could be kept but scratch the legal wording. Dr. Baeta said the policy would be rewritten in draft paragraph form with input from legal counsel.

No vote taken at this time.

Other:

- Finance Committee meeting on Monday, March 27th
- Matter regarding charging Town youth organizations custodian fee for field rentals was discussed. Dr. Baeta met with Facilities Director, Wade Lizotte, and the custodial union. No fee to the youth organizations as long as no messes are left behind. Fee necessary for tournaments or when indoor facilities are used. Organizations must have liability insurance tied to NPS.

Adjourn:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to Adjourn and to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussions on non-union personnel matters and in preparation of contract negotiations under NTA contract for Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants and Speech-Language Pathology Assistants, not to return to Open Session.

SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher

ROLL CALL VOTE: Nick Schleicher – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes

5 Yes – Motion Carries

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

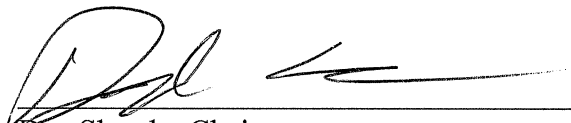
Next Meeting Date: Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the NMS Library

Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:

- Technology Department slide presentation
- Draft 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school calendars
- READS Collaborative Agreement
- Bi-County Collaborative Agreement
- Draft Secondary Students Freedom of Expression policy
- Draft Therapy/Emotional Support Canines in Schools policy
- Current NPS Policy IMG – Animals in School

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph F. Baeta, Ed.D.
Secretary Pro Tem



Dan Sheedy, Chairperson




Sheri Cohen, Vice-Chairperson



Carolyn Gallagher



Deniz Savas



Nick Schleicher

tlr